

EDLD 5306 : Week 4 – Assignment#4: Privacy, Legal, Ethical, Copyright or Security Issues: Cyber Ethics

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Patricia Startz : Student Number: L20052259

Student

Lamar University /Academic Partnerships

Educational Technology Leadership Program

This paper will discuss the issue of *Cyber Ethics* providing a brief discussion of the origination of the field of *Cyber Ethics*. This will be followed with a discussion of how Ethics relates to technology and why it is important for classroom teachers to know about this issue.

According to, the freedictionary.com, ethics is “a. A set of principles of right conduct. b. A theory or a system of moral values,” (2011). Consider how ethics applies to computers and technology in general. To paraphrase separate but related articles in the Wikipedia online encyclopedia (2011), electronic computers came into being in the early 1960’s and the first recorded computer crime occurred in 1966 when, a computer thief was released because there were no computer crime laws. Computer crimes author, Donn Parker, can be credited with drafting the first computer technology code of ethics later in the 1960’s and by 1970, Walter Manner, had coined the term, “*computer ethics*” to label the study of ethical issues relating to computers and their use. Philosophical dogmas including, “Relativism, Utilitarianism, and Social Contract,” topics beyond the scope of this paper, have comingled to form the foundations of the modern field of study, Cyber Ethics. The “What is Cyber Ethics?” article on the site cybercitizenship.org (2011) says “ ‘Cyber Ethics’ refers to responsible cyber social behavior...what people do online when no one else is looking.”

After reading several articles, it is clear that experts in the field of Cyber Ethics consider the topic as an umbrella encompassing privacy, legal, security, and copyright laws as they relate to technology use. While the articles addressed hacking, which involves legal, privacy and security issues; each authority seemed much more concerned with software piracy, and copyright infringements. Technology director, Jerry Crystal, was quoted in Linda Starr’s 2003 article, ***Tools for Teacher Cyber Ethics***, as saying, “ the most common problem isn’t hacking (illegally accessing websites) or cracking (vandalizing websites); it’s the unauthorized downloading of

games and software.” Also according to Crystal, the other ethical issue that affects his and most other schools, “is the misuse of intellectual property, or copyright violations.” Starr’s article utilized a 2003, Scholastic, Inc. student poll to point out that at that time, nearly half the students did not believe hacking was a crime. Also in 2003, the FBI issued a request to schools to add Cyber Ethics curriculum to their daily instruction. Teaching & Learning’s, February 2010 article, *Cyber security, safety, and ethics educations falls short in U.S. schools*, refers to a 2009, Zogby International Cyber safety and ethics poll of teachers, administrators, and technology coordinators which points out, “there is no cohesive effort to provide young people the education they need to safely and securely navigate the digital age and prepare them as digital citizens and employees.” This finding is reflective of the widely held opinion of school administrators, that since ethics is a morally based issue, it should be taught at home. In his 2009 Cyberspace Policy Review, President Obama specifically called “for a K-12 cyber security education program for digital safety, ethics, and security.” This clarified that Cyber Ethics is a topic K-12 curriculum must address. In the interim, schools have been provided with free cyber safety curriculum from the National Cyber Security Alliance.

In simplest terms, ethics is about making right moral choices. Cyber Ethics is the right use of technology. The title to Robert Kruger’s , 2003 article in The Social Studies Journal, “Discussing Cyber Ethics with Students Is Critical,” says it best. President Obama gave this responsibility to K-12 educators in 2009. Schools were given the curriculum in the Fall of 2010. Now it is up to teachers to find ways to integrate and document this integration of Cyber Ethics curriculum into their daily technology integrated instruction. Mr. Kruger’s recommendations: “1. Teach by example, 2. Work cyber ethics into assignments and discussion, 3. Seek cyber ethics resources.”

References

(2011), *Ethics*, retrieved 5/7/2011, from <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/ethics>.

(2011), *Computer*, retrieved on 5/7/2011 from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer>.

(2011), *Computer_ethics*, retrieved on 5/7/2011 from
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_ethics

Note: the contents of the above Wikipedia articles refers to historical events documented in textbooks for 8th grade computer literacy to which I no longer have access.

(2011), *Cyber Ethics: Applying Old Values to a New Medium*, retrieved on 5/7/2011 from
<http://cybercitizenship.org/ethics/ethics.html>.

Starr, L. (2003, updated 2005). *Tools for Teaching Cyber Ethics*, retrieved [5/7/2011 1:16:08 AM] from http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech/tech055.shtml.

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